

The emergency designations were appropriate because the human and physical costs of these disasters were extraordinary and the economic effects were truly national in scope.

Of the pending \$6.7 billion FEMA request, \$4.9 billion is related to the Northridge earthquake. Over 700,000 people were affected. Approximately 120,000 structures, including schools, hospitals, municipal buildings and private residences, were damaged. Almost 40 miles of roads and freeways were rendered impassable.

Following the January 17, 1994 earthquake, I responded with a request for emergency supplemental funding on January 26. Congress quickly responded to the urgent needs of the Southern California region and I promptly signed the emergency legislation on February 12, just 26 days after the earthquake.

The nation should be proud of our rapid response. All of the damaged highways were reopened to traffic within 10 months. Virtually all of the 6,000 school buildings that were damaged have reopened. Over 113,000 loans have been made to small businesses and homeowners, and FEMA disaster housing assistance has been provided to over 400,000 households.

Because of the need to respond quickly to the earthquake, FEMA's damage estimates were

necessarily preliminary. Our revised request is based on the more detailed studies that are required of damaged structures.

If action on our request is delayed, FEMA will, beginning in May, be unable to allocate funds to meet any new disaster requirements, unless money reserved for the 40 states currently receiving disaster assistance is cut. For example, emergency appropriations provided in FY 1994 are currently being used to fund assistance to people, businesses and local governments impacted by Tropical Storm Alberto in Georgia, the Midwest floods, the Texas floods and the recent floods in California. If action is further delayed until July, FEMA will run out of money.

While I share your concern for reducing the deficit, I do not believe we should delay assistance to victims of natural disasters. I am proud of my Administration's record for reducing the deficit, while providing prompt assistance to the victims of natural disasters. When responding to crises, America has traditionally come together without regard to politics or region. In that spirit, I urge you to reconsider your decision.

Sincerely,

BILL CLINTON

Interview With Dick Enberg of NBC Sports in Palm Springs, California February 15, 1995

Mr. Enberg. Well, a historic foursome. How do you put this group together to play a game of golf?

Bob Hope. Well, it's damned lucky, I think, you know. Because I called President Clinton and asked him, and he finally said, "Yes, I'd like to do that." Then I got President Ford, President Bush, and we got—and me. Three Presidents and a hacker. *[Laughter]*

Mr. Enberg. Mr. Clinton, your ambitions as a golfer—have you set any goals?

President Clinton. I'm just trying to get my handicap in single digits. That's my goal. It seems unlikely in my present position. But I love to play, and I was gratified when Bob called me the other day. He said that he liked my State of the Union Address, but I could speak

a lot better if I come out here and played in his tournament. It would put me in a better frame of mind.

Mr. Enberg. You're without your 35-year-old putter. I hope the rumors aren't true that Mr. Ford confiscated that. *[Laughter]*

President Gerald R. Ford. Well, Dick, I've played here 17 years with Bob, and it's always a great, great thrill. He's kind of a scoundrel, but he's fun to play with, and it's a great cause.

Mr. Enberg. And your thoughts, Mr. Bush?

President George Bush. Just to try to get it in the air. *[Laughter]*

President Clinton. We're going to try to stay out of—we're going to avoid out of bounds, he and I are. We're not going to go too far

right or too far left. We're going to play political golf today. [Laughter]

Mr. Enberg. Have you been in this close an association in recent terms, or have you played before?

President Clinton. We've never played golf together before, but President Bush has been good enough to support a lot of things we've done together on trade and issues, for example, things he started that I tried to finish. So we've been together on several occasions.

Mr. Enberg. Any interesting wagers as you go around today?

President Bush. I don't know. We haven't gotten to that.

President Clinton. We're on the same side. We want somebody to bet with us and these other foursomes.

Mr. Enberg. Well, how about that on this side?

President Ford. Well, Bob and I will take the young fellows on. [Laughter]

Mr. Hope. Yes, sir.

Mr. Enberg. Well, Mr. Hope, this event becomes bigger and better every year. It's a great testimony to your love for—

Mr. Hope. Well, I'll tell you, we've drawn a crowd here today. I don't remember seeing anything like this. It's a beautiful thing to have happen for golf, you know, because you can't do any better.

President Clinton. Absolutely.

Mr. Enberg. Isn't it interesting that in these complicated times, this sport brings this unusual group together?

President Clinton. One of the nicest things about golf is that it's really becoming a sport for every man and woman in America. All kinds of people, all these new courses coming up, public courses, people able to play who never could have played 10, 20 years ago. And that's very rewarding, because it's a sport that you can play throughout your life and at all different skill levels. It's really a perfect sport for our people.

Mr. Enberg. Well, you gentlemen are used to high pressure. I can't think of anything in sports that has more anxiety and pressure than that first hit. [Laughter]

President Clinton. We are nervous as cats. We were just talking about it. We're just as nervous as we can be. [Laughter]

President Ford. Dick, I would advise people they should stay behind us. [Laughter]

Mr. Enberg. Gentlemen, thank you very much, President Bush, President Clinton.

President Clinton. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The interview was taped at 9:56 a.m. for later broadcast at the Indian Wells Country Club, where the President participated in the Bob Hope Chrysler Classic golf tournament. A tape was not available for verification of the content of this interview.

Statement on Petroleum Imports and Energy Security February 16, 1995

I am today concurring with the Department of Commerce's finding that the Nation's growing reliance on imports of crude oil and refined petroleum products threaten the Nation's security because they increase U.S. vulnerability to oil supply interruptions. I also concur with the Department's recommendation that the administration continue its present efforts to improve U.S. energy security, rather than to adopt a specific import adjustment mechanism.

This action responds to a petition under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act of 1962, which was filed by the Independent Petroleum Association of America and others on March

11, 1994. The act gives the President the authority to adjust imports if they are determined to pose a threat to national security. The petitioners sought such action, claiming that U.S. dependence on oil imports had grown since the Commerce Department last studied the issue in response to a similar, 1988 petition.

In conducting its study, the Department led an interagency working group that included the Departments of Energy, Interior, Defense, Labor, State, and Treasury, the Office of Management and Budget, the Council of Economic Advisers, and the U.S. Trade Representative. The Commerce Department also held public